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346 other to the west, and covered with a thatched roof in which is hidden an object called dolin. The village is surrounded by several sacred places: a sunzun tree to the north; a well to the west; two stones, one (fara fi) situated near the village and the other (fara gwe) on the river's edge.

796 The septennial ceremony is performed at night. Toward evening, the eldest of the Kéita goes secretly to remove the object dolin from the old thatch and hides it. The new roof is made with materials gathered by the descendants of Farako Makan Kegni (straw, bamboo, and fibers) while the women of the same relationship plaster the walls. The Dyabaté griot who will officiate provide themselves with a little stick of sunzun wood about the length of the ring finger with which they will rub their teeth; the twigs must be cut by the elder sister of the chief of the griot who gives her in exchange /xv/ a loin-cloth of eight [801] bands of white cotton and a number of cowries in multiples of 8 such as 8, 480.

The orators who will officiate during the night wear a white cap topped by a band of cotton of the same color and a yellow tunic (wolo) (see p. 20). Sitting inside the hut from which the old roof has been removed, facing east, they spit into a receptacle in order not to soil the ground. The Kéita remain outside the hut on a site marked by stones and covered with gravel collected in the river bed by young men. During the entire night, the griot, each in turn and encouraged by a relative, recite from the devices of all the tribes issued from Mandé. At dawn, they sing as they circle the construction; then the Kéita hoist up the new roof. Next, the elder

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3. From ta (to do, in the ancient language) and si (to act). The Bambara freely translate tasi as "spirit of nothing" and give this stage, originating in nothingness and preceding creation, the name of tasi dyɛ̃, "world of the spirit of nothing."

called oryo or oyo, is broken down into three stages: yo, the inner word, invisible spirit and inaudible voice, potentially containing all creation: o the transition from the inaudible to the audible; [801] yereyereli, the creative vibration (4). The progression is represented

4. The name oyo, given to this system, is a composite of o and yo, and when pronounced reverses the chronological order. This anomaly is recognized by the Bambara who explain it by the fact that yo, designating an inaudible voice, cannot be pronounced before o which designates a perceptible noise. Thus, in reversing the chronological order, yo "remains in the secret of o" which is in accord with its nature.

by seven signs, 7 being the symbolic number of man (homo) "seed of the world." Indeed, this numeral is the sum of 3 (male symbol) and 4 (female symbol). The couple they form is itself the symbol of duality, the fundamental law of creation, since each human being is both male and female in body and spirit (5).

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5. The number 3 represents the penis and two testicles of the male body; the number 4 the four labia of the female body. On the other hand, man and woman are each endowed with two twin souls of different sexes; the soul of sex, opposite to that of its bearer, has its seat in the foreskin or the clitoris until the operation of circumcision or excision is performed. For further discussion of the duality of man and his

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person, see G. Dieterlen, La Personne chez les Bambara /The individual among the Bambara/ and infra, Ch. 3, The Person.

772 It is said that yo, the inner secret voice, "is born of itself, is known by itself, and comes out from itself /6/, out of the nothing which is itself" (1). Out of yo there will come only things that are themselves

1. yo na na a yere la, bwora a yere la, dona a yere la, a be fu la min ya yere ye.

and that will be nothing other than yo. Each thing, being yo, proceeds like yo, only from itself. Hence, man is nothing other than himself, since he is a creation of yo and since yo's creations are by itself. Thus, there is nothing in the world besides oneself, since the person is yo, and yo is entirely contained in the person. As a result, each being is directly descended from yo with no intermediary; it is yo and exists only because it wills it. That is to say, man, the image of yo, alone has the will, alone has the capacity to bring forth action or creation, since these can be nothing but himself. "Who then," say the initiates, " can know himself, make himself known and manifest himself, other than through himself? Who then can manifest anything but himself?"

But yo, being at the origin of the inaudible and invisible things that are itself, is also in the unknown, hence in nothingness. And consequently, the same is true of man who is nothingness and can act only on the nothingness of himself.

Thus, yo, insofar as it was mind, was free in its ability to decide and to use its creative will. Its work, in nothingness, consisted in shedding, "for it was the continuous shedding of the world." When it
772 manifested itself by rotating on itself, it went five times to the four
801 "angles of its thought," seleke miri, once to the "sky of its thought," sã miri, once to the "earth of its thought," dugukolo miri, thus communicating its power to them (2). The realization of this universe,

2. On the meaning of the number 5, see p. 25. Yo has endowed the "angles," corresponding to the "cardinal angles" in the completed universe, with its greatest

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strength for there the Bambara place the poles of attraction which, in the universe, uphold all bodies. It is said: "All bodies accept the force of attraction of the four angles," fari be bi sõ seleke nuni mana barika la.

which determined "the space of yo in its own thought," is expressed by the number 22: "yo, darkness of creation, in the depth of the secret space of night, master of the foundation of the 22 rotations, great bearer of vibration, great builder of the marrow of bones (1).

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1. yo dali dyibi, su kene gundo tyema, munumunu mu tani ma siki ba, yere done ba, kolow nye kono dlaba; kono being the ancient term for marrow.

This prayer is recited in honor of yo when a woman's pregnancy is first noticed; it is also recited at eclipses of the sun.

These 22 spirals stirred up all that yo contained in spirit; nugu, "entrails, intestines," which carried all things and man within itself; yafã, "seed of the air," which placed the voids in all /7/ parts of space"; fayã, "seed of the wind"; sani, "seed of water"; yerẽ, "seed of fire"; yelẽgu, "seed of earthly matter" (2). The rotations of yo

2. fayã, sani, yerẽ (in ancient language), and yelẽgu were at the origin of the four elements, air, water, fire and earth, all of which did not yet exist but were to appear later.

The seven elements composing yo are represented by signs, reproduced in Figure 1 (1 to 7).

put them in order and kept them under the force of attraction (mana). In other words, carried away by this whirlwind, both magnetic and creative, the elements became organized, one in relation to the other; in this way the 22 terms of the universe, as thought out by yo, were determined; these terms are also the 22 periods of its thought:

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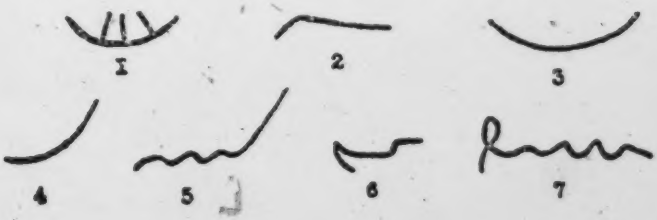
1. origin of the west, klebi dyu
2. origin of the east, koro dyu
3. origin of the north, baba dyu
4. origin of the south, bani dyu
5. the sky from above, sã̃ kaba



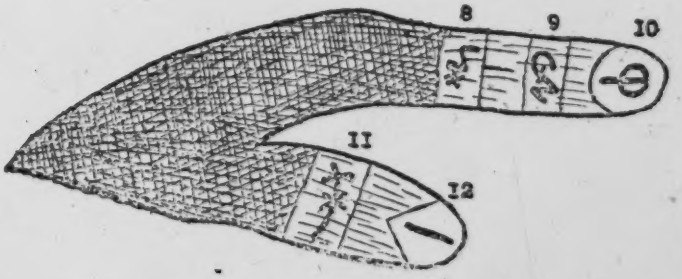


Fig. 1.—Bambara signs. From 1 to 7, signs of yo. From 8 to 12, signs of the king's thumb and index finger, representing the actual world and the future world (drawings by an informant).

6. secret space, tyema gundo
7. earth, dugu
8. center of the earth, kotye dugu
9. eye of the earth, dugu nye
10. mouth of the earth, dugu da (1)

[823]

1. The earth breathes through orifices called "mouths."

11. northwest, seleke se /8/ (literally: foot of the angle)

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12. southwest, seleke bolo (literally: hand of the angle)
13. northeast, seleke (angle)
14. southeast, seleke (angle)
15. sun, kle
16. moon, kalo
17. male star, dolo ke
18. female star, dolo muso
19. mouth or mother of the star, dolo da or dolo ba
20. grain of rain, sã kise
21. secret rain, sã gundo
22. damp rain, sã suma (1).

1. It is said of these times: "yo says only yo above, one should imitate this; the world has moved to the west, the east, the north, the south, " yo bi yo fo sana, ladeke ka kãka kẹ o la, giri kera wa la, ni flaye la, ni kaye la, ni noro la. The terms giri, wa, flaye, kaye, noro belong to the ancient language.

While whirling from the "angles" to the cardinal sides, yo thought out four worlds (2):

2. The four worlds are represented by a drawing made up of four concentric quadrangular figures, observed by the informant in the village of Kéré in Mandé. The Bambara conceive of space as a square with cardinal angles and sides (see p. 55 , Fig. 3).

The first, dyẽ mana, "the shedding of the world, " belongs to the time when yo "circulated within himself" in nothingness, and of which it is said: "yo was the shedding of the world; he made himself shed"(3).

3. yo tunye dyẽ mana ye, o tumbi mana a yere la.

The following world, dyẽ gale, "the first world, " is the universe about to be realized, the actual world, and it is said that its symbol

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is 3: "The foundation of the first world was given to all things by yo, these things were constructed at 3." (1) In order to realize the world,

1. dyɛ̃ gale sikityoko dira fama yo fɛ few ma, o few ye dlali ke saba la.

yo had to use intermediaries which he created as such, but which were responsible for imperfection since the harmony of all things would have required that creation be directly willed and engendered by yo himself. The first constructed universe is thus 3: yo is 1, the intermediary is 2, the world itself is 3. As a result the whole creation is not equal to yo, for its perfection would have expressed itself by 2, that is to say by yo and the world with no intermediary (2).

2. This idea would seem to contradict the principle of yo's identity with all creation. It should be taken to mean that the total work of creation also includes imperfection. The cause of this imperfection is precisely the presence of intermediaries created, so to speak, with this purpose in mind.

On the other hand, it is said that the actualized universe was constructed and perceived at 3, known at 4. When yo decided to create, in period one, nothing could know it, since it alone moved in the nothingness in which it placed its energies. When these energies united, they formed a new unity which, added to yo, made 2, that is to say the period two which was as yet unknown. These energies grew slowly heavier while "resisting in attraction," that is, ordering themselves. This was /9/ period three and things became perceptible. But not until period four did they become clearly known, that is, man became conscious of them. As a result, masculinity (symbol 3) in nature is considered the original stimulus in determining fertility. The fulfillment of fertility and the complete knowledge of it can only be accomplished through femininity (symbol 4).

But yo, being perfect, wanted perfection, and in attempting to achieve it, wished to reach 5. For this purpose, he went beyond universe 3 and reached 4. Since numbers were already the symbol of

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things and (so to speak) the things themselves, 4, representing femininity, could not create by itself, for 4 does not exist in 3, symbol of masculinity. And in the universe as thought out by yo, nothing can be engendered without the help of complementaries or twins, whose prototype is the couple: masculinity-femininity.

World 4 is called dyẽ bana, "the refused world," for, in the face of difficulty, yo kept that creation within itself; it remains there as a potential and will return into the world called dyẽ nata, "the world to come," in which, reaching 5, yo will achieve a universe not in 3, like the actual one, but in 2 (yo and the world), without an intermediary. Hence its perfection, for it will be equal to its creator. This universe will be created in the opposite direction of the preceding one in the following order: south, north, east, and west. It will be established by the "great voice of one word" and characterized by the transformation of beings, a new distribution, the absence of error, a close contact with the essence of things, and perfect knowledge. For it is said: "In the world to come, all words will be changed. Solidity was not achieved in this creation, but union will be accomplished in the solidity of one word. Yo's course, yo's work, yo's sleep will penetrate every being. The second world is a new world, the world of one word" (1).

1. Dyẽ nata la, kumaw be bi yelema;
sikityoko ma kle dali ko la fara ñugã
na kẹ kuma dyotyoko kele nye; yo boli,
yo bara, yo suna, bi dõ ma be la;
dyẽ fla ye dyẽ kura ye, dyẽ kura ye
kuma kele nye.

This text is sometimes recited in the course of talks which follow religious ceremonies, and at times when the movements of creation are discussed. Many details of rituals and games indicate this preoccupation with a second universe. See Fig. 1, p. 22 and Fig. 4, p. 56.

Because yo has only constructed the first universe, men understand only half of its thought, the other half to be realized in the "second world."

772 After having thought out the universe and rotated upon itself to
801 create the universe, yo "divided and distributed its Word." It placed three times 22 voices /10/ in o, which then entrusted one time 22 voices to yereyereli, out of which the finally conceived universe was to come forth. This deposit in o is none other than the change of the inaudible voice, yo, into an audible voice. When that voice began to sound outside of yo, still invisible and secret, the latter stopped moving and remained motionless within itself: o, in its sound, is the emissary of yo. And in that voice all things necessary to the building of the universe were proposed; all these things also potentially rumbled across the "angles of the world." When this primary movement reached its heighth, the yereyereli, the vibration, issued from it, and when the vibration existed and was shed, o stopped rumbling but was itself the spirit of movement: it is said: "yere came forth from o, o was its foundation" (1).

1. yere bwora o la, o kera siki kele nye a ko.

772 Yo being the immense and inaudible voice, o became the rumbling voice; finally yereyereli, the high-sounding vibration, formed the rays of light in space. The whole of the infinite trembled, shone, and resounded. After the yereyereli had filled space with movement, light, and sound, it ask o for its power and became "pregnant," bearing all it wanted and had to create: "The vibration had the power of attraction, the creator was secretly within it" (2). The present uni-

2. Yereyereli tunye mana ma ye, daliba tumbi a kono gundo la.
The Bambara imagined that the light and sound of this vibration were such that they were intolerable to vision and hearing; however, even though man cannot perceive the vibration, it exists nonetheless; "the egg of the world continues its vibration in sound and light."

verse issued from the vibration, provoking "astonishment," koni, a term used to designate both the yereyereli and the creative principle it contained (3).

772 3. On koni, see S. de Canay, Notes sur la théodicée bambara, pp. 188ff.

Creation of the Universe

772 773 At the center of yereyereli was the spirit, miri, in the spirit was the doing, wali; in the doing was the coming of all things, nali; and in nali was the division of all things, tali. These four terms also define the four basic elements of creation, respectively air, earth, fire, and water; air and fire being male, earth and water, female. (1)

1. "yereyereli was originally made up of four elements which enabled it to vibrate secretly," (yereyereli gale gale kono kera ni wale nani ye, o ya to a sera ka yereyereli su a la).

The miri was also "the egg of the world in which nature was enclosed." It is represented by three ovals, all contained within each other; this figure also expresses the three /11/ rotations made by yereyereli at each of the cardinal points (in the following order: north, south, east, west), each rotation stirring up the four elements (2). The central oval, or so de, "son of the house," is the primordial

● [801]

2. See Fig. 2, p. 34 . Creation is thus expressed by the numbers seven and 12, obtained by the addition and multiplication of three (male symbol, and number of rotations) and four (female symbol and number of elements). Seven is the symbol of man (homo) and of the principle of the universe; 12 is the symbol of the multiplication of beings and of the perpetual development of this universe.

grain which placed all things in the nature of the four elements. The intermediary oval, dyẽ wali gale, "the first action of the world,"

772 773 represents fertility; it determines man, the principal thing of the universe, who has also received from it the capacity for thought and knowledge. The external oval, dyẽ ko, "gate of the world," is essentially mobile; rotating upon itself, it dilates or contracts, depending upon the births or deaths of the multiple-formed matter it contains. It is this oval that makes all things in the universe "unable to escape from the sight of the creator" (1).

1. fẽw be dyele ngala ka yeli kono.

772 801 773 The essential part of that which the yereyereli stirred up as it rotated was the spirit. The spirit, inflated by all its potential power, finally began to sound. "The spirit resounded in the midst of facts," (2) and as it was the strongest element in space, it held itself up alone

2. miri ye manga ti walew tyela.

and arose. Then it burst and from it poured elements which slowly separated, dispersed, and ordered themselves. It is said of this event: "In the old days, all things came out together" (3). These fundamental

3. folo kow bõñuana.

elements, numbering twenty-two, are at the origin of creation which is classified into twenty-two categories.

The Bambara use several methods to order and name these elements. First, according to the fundamental system of creative thought, yo, they divide the elements into three groups of seven, to which a twenty-second is added.

The first seven, dyẽ dyo kã gale, "the first voice of the building of the world," express yereyereli before knowledge, but containing all things with man, "seed" of nature, in the first place. The seven following elements, dyẽ dyo kã saba "the third voice of the building of the world," denote the beginning of the knowledge of yereyereli as masculinity and assures all fertility. It is at this moment that the term koni appears, attributed to yereyereli, and expressing awe before creation. The last seven, dye dyo ka nani "the fourth voice of the building of the world," contains "the complete revelation of the dispositions and situations /12/ of all that was created";

772 yereyereli then becomes known as femininity and assures the supremacy
801 of femininity over nature. The twenty-second element sums up these
773 three groups of seven and expresses total knowledge (1).

> 1. The same progression of numbers as in the creative thought yo, characterizes the creation by vibration. Being 1, the vibration passed on to 2. At 2, it conceived invisible "light air" and the powers it contained were grouped together to form a whole. At 3, the powers became gravity, and the visible "heavy air" appeared. At 4, and only at that moment, creation, completely visible, was revealed to the consciousness. For further discussion of the "heavy air," see also S. de Ganay, Notes sur la théodicée bambara, p. 188.

Another division of the elements determines the categories. The first seven are the bõnuana of which it is said: "The seven bõnuana came out first" (2). Then came twelve bangini, births or bayeremani

> 2. Bõnuana wolo fla bwora folo. The word bõnuana means literally "come out together."

"discoveries," of which it is said: "Twelve discoveries were left in space" (3). After them, there appeared three jiginis, foundations or

> 3. Bangini tani fla bla ka kẹnẹ da.

dyoli, situations, of which it is said: "Three foundations ate up the world" (4). The first seven elements are the "states of the world";

> 4. Jigini saba ye dyẽ dũ.

the next twelve, "the foundations of the world"; the last three, "the words of the world's situation" (5).

> 5. dyẽ dyo tyoko; dyẽ sigi tyoko; dyẽ dyo ka.

773 824 root by his own power and became the first of all trees, the balanza, green in dry season and dry in rainy season, and it extended his power (1).

1. The balanza is not Pemba in his totality, which is spirit, force, and matter. It is Pemba's earthly metamorphosis and, more especially, the image of his fertile masculinity. Pemba took the shape of the balanza in order to continue his work of creation and to bring death on the earth.

773 The human beings born of Faro lived amidst the burning rocks and sought refuge under that tree, whose power was obvious to all since it needed no water to keep it green. They prayed to it and received from it directives for their lives. Since they were immortal, time did not exist. However, they figured their age according to their pilosity: at age 12, the public hair grew; at 22, the hair under the arms; at 36, the beard was black; at 52, the hair whitened. When he could count the four types of hair, his being was complete; but seven years later, he suddenly grew thin and lost his vitality, and his soul weakened; he was then an old man.

Men at that time knew no language and had no clothes. They lived naked and communicated to each other through gestures and grunts. At the instigation of Mousso Koroni, and in order to recognize [801] each other, they scarred their face with three or four lines, three being the sexual symbol of man (the penis and two testicles) and four that of woman (the four labia). In keeping with this, each person, according to his sex, would repeat his actions three or four times.

Men at that time received their food from /18/ the sky, thanks to the spirit Téliko, who, up in space, watched over Faro's waters. During the rainy season, he would send them stones from the seventh heaven containing karite nuts, si kolo. From these stones the women extracted oil which they ate with fruit. One day, during the dry season, a woman who had drawn oil from four nuts wiped her hands on the balanza under which she was seated alone. "This, I want," said the tree. From then on, all the women offered him oil and were imitated by men who later partook of the cult.

However, the balanza was no longer satisfied with only Mousso Koroni. It demanded that all the women give it their love. Therefore

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taught certain agricultural techniques. In both tribes, the same star, Sirius (called sigi toto by the Dogon; sigi doto by the Bambara), represents them. The androgynous Faro is comparable in all ways to the Nommo, the universal monitor, custodian of the word and of life. The yurugu and the Nommo made voyages similar to those of Pemba and Faro. In particular, at the time of their descent on earth, the yurugu, and later the Nommo, used an "ark," [illegible], whose counterparts are Pemba's wood pembele and Faro's ark kuru, described by certain initiates (see M. Griaule, L'Arche du monde chez les populations nigériennes. /The ark of the world among Nigerian peoples/.

For both tribes, man "the seed of the world," is the image of the cosmos. The exact role of the seed of the Acacia albida does not appear clearly in the two myths, but in both cases, it is considered to be a first aborted creation.

Faro's Reign

773 Faro, having vanquished the balanza and overcome Téliko, took over the creation himself. He reorganized the whole universe and established the order under which it still functions today. /27/ He spread his word and his light; he named and classified all things: "All things (of the universe) are under the domination of Faro; eight hundred transformations are in his power" (1).

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1. Fêw be be faro ka se kono, yelemani ba kele be a la a fe.

The number 800 which is "the end of the count," here expresses the infinite. In the so-called "eastern number system," now

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used by most Sudanese, the principal units are 1, 80, 800, etc. Ten remains a secondary unit for counting from 1 to 79 and is combined with 80 for units of the other orders.

There is also the so-called "Mandé" number system, the principal units of which are 1, 60, 600, etc. in which 10 remains a secondary unit for the count from 1 to 59, and combines with 60 for units of a higher order.

On the other hand, it must be noted that the Bambara number system is vigesimal and reflects the concept of the person as identified with the 20 fingers of his hands and feet, and spiritually endowed with two souls of the opposite sex, each of which represents the number 10. If one follows this line of thought, 10 is the unit parexcellence (see p. 213, n. 2). The two counts, 60 and 80, in Sudanese metaphysics, are complementary in the sense that one, 60, is male (60 is three times the person) and the other, 80, is female (80, four times the person) (for a discussion on 3 and 4, see p. 19). In the tribes where generally only the count based on 80 is used, the count based on 60 is still used today in certain rituals (principally among the Dogon).

773 To carry through his plan, Faro undertook a voyage of reconnaissance to the ends of the world in order to name the cardinal points.

He first visited the east, and all the beings who lived there recognized his power and his wisdom. Comparing the luminous whiteness of this region to that of hair discolored by age, he gave it the name of koro, old, a word which also indicates that it was his first stop. He made the east the seat of death.

He then went to the west. As it was dark there, he named the inhabitants klebi maw, "people of the fallen sun." He made the

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2. Grouped hierarchally, children, male adults, and women form religious societies or institutions, dyo. Each dyo is charged with the upkeep of altars which serve to preserve the spiritual forces of the group. (See p.

the dying man to go into the water and place itself under Faro's protection. At the moment of delivery, both ni and dya return to the body of the newborn child who replaces the dead man, but they return in reversed order: the dya is returned to the body of the child and becomes his ni; the ni of the deceased mixes with the birth water spread on the ground which forms the shadow (suma) and will be his double, the twin (1). In the case of a boy, the dya will be female; in the

[844
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1. The blood of childbirth represents the excess tomato juice absorbed by the woman, that which remains in the womb after the formation of the embryo. On the eighth day after birth, the mother of the parturient woman squeezes three or four tomatoes (depending on the sex of the newborn) into a gourd which she then gives to the child's father. The latter makes his wife drink the juice to replace the blood which she has lost and which is considered impure.

case /59/ of a girl, it will be male. These movements are independent of the sex of the deceased as the spirit reverses the sexes when necessary. Each human being is thus both male and female [828] through his soul and his double. This conception of human nature, which is fundamental to the Bambara, is expressed in the symbolism of numbers. The number seven is formed of three (male sexual symbol) and four (female sexual symbol) and represents the complete [801] man. In addition, on another level, the number six is that of male twins, seven that of mixed twins (and the hermaphrodite), and eight that of female twins. The body of the newborn child is gently tapped [844] by the number of strokes representing the above figures in order to call the child's ni according to its sex.

826 is also through the feet that a part of man's strength is deposited in the sweepings and rubbish upon which he treads. Their role as receptacles appears in the rituals concerning household refuse and the dirt on roads and paths.

Like the little finger, the small toe symbolizes the whole person. [301] It is sometimes adorned with a silver ring, symbol of the word, which recalls that man's body is the seat of the word extended within him from head to feet (1).

1. In olden times the ring on the small toe was made of red nyama fiber (nyama fu), which played the same role as metal.

831 The notion of the bisexuality of human beings is fundamental:
826 the spiritual principles are sexed like the body, whose ambivalence /71/ is evident during childhood: the boy is feminine in his foreskin; the girl is masculine in her clitoris. One of the aims of circumcision [304] and excision is to help the child attain the sex to which it is apparently destined by removing the organ of the opposite sex. (2). But the

[171] 2. The same conception is found among the Dogon; see M. Griaule, Dieu d'eau, p. 185.

initial duality of the soul and body is the very foundation of the human being. He is complete only if he originally received it, and he retains it even after the operation imposed by physical and social life, [774] for the soul of the opposite sex, though diminished in the body, remains present in the shadow, the dya. He also rediscovers his dual unity when he marries. A married couple are a unit for their dya [581] join as do their bodies in an act which is not merely physical and which realizes the ideal union of twins.

831 The sex to which one belongs dominates one's whole existence on earth. Objects and tools bear masculine or feminine marks, according to the rules of the division of labor. The numbers three (man) and four (woman) are abridged forms of the sex. "Primitive men" who, according to the Bambara expressed themselves mostly by gestures and signs, engraved their rare objects with the number of

831 lines or dots depending upon the sex of those who used them. Thus,
801 women marked their spindles with four lines whereas men twisted three threads on their shuttles.

826 On the metaphysical level, man's body, "the seed of the world," is identified with the cereal grain. The Bambara separate cereal
824 grains into seven parts, corresponding to a division of the human
812 organs into seven groups (1). Man and grain are one and identical in

1. The divisions of the grain are as follows: kungu, "little beard of millet," involucre; fara dye, "white bark," glume and glumales; fara fi, "black bark," bran and protein aceous bark; fara mugu, "farinaceous bark" (which corresponds to a milky diastatic zone); mugu dunta, "flour for eating," starch; kolo dye, "white bone," embryo; kise de, "son of grain," the micropyle from which the rootlet issues at the time of germination. The classification of organs in relation to these divisions is under study. We thank M. Pitot of the Institut Français d'Afrique Noire for the identification of the parts of the grain corresponding to the native divisions. In certain villages, grains
[782] undergo a process of hulling and the determined elements only are used in the making up of the ritually offered millet mash.

their substance. On the other hand, the basic foods, that is, the eight principal cereals, are symbolically present in the collarbones (kolo kalanjiri, or ka kolo). Man carries within him his subsistance, and its location reflects the person's general condition (2). As proof
[783]

2. See p. 53, n. 2.

of /72/ man's spiritual integrity, these grains leave him when he is in a state of impurity. He is then drained of his substance and subsistence. Thepurpose of purification is to reestablish this wholeness.

812 Moreover, the bonds which unite the whole person, body and
561 spiritual principles, to the cosmos, are made clear by the fact that

291 for his great earthly labors." When clouds form, it is said that Faro
773 "is showing the buguni in the sky" and the diviners advise each person
821 to wear a strip in homage to the spirit and to facilitate the coming of
531 rain. The geomaneer gently rubs the earth, where he is going to draw signs, with a cloth of this design. It is as though he has injected sun, light, and truth into the work he must execute on the impure soil.

291 This band is also called kolõso mako, "necessity of the mixture, "
773 or kami, guinea hen, whose plumage as well as whose fragility the band betokens. In this respect, the buguni symbolizes man's weakness and incompleteness. When placed on a convalescent's clothing, [755] it signifies that the latter has lost some of his vitality during his illness. Dressed in this fashion, he goes to the Niger and bathes so that Faro might heal him. A man who has suffered severe financial losses also wears the buguni. At the market, in public meetings, he will not be made to pay his share of beer because of the band's silent language which is clearer than words. If a widower remarries, he sews a piece of it on his cap in memory of his first wife. The knife of the person offering a sacrifice is wrapped in the buguni, for it "never has enough blood, " also in certain boli which continually crave it.

/111/ In conclusion, the squares of indigo cloth represent the void and darkness; the white ones, fulfillment and light. To wear the buguni signifies hope, the impure or weak man hoping to become pure, strong, and fulfilled.

The bugunimba (literally, large buguni) or nyedẽ (literally, threads of the eye) has the same symbolism. A wound is bandaged with it. A man who has broken a taboo wears a cap of this material; an illegitimate child also wears it. The buguni tyekorole which symbolizes the impurity of Mousso Koroni is used to implore Faro's help in great calamities and for misfortunes without remedy. Thus, the body of a stillborn child is covered with it.

291 The buguni nyama (Pl. III, a, 4), made of twenty-two alternating
773 indigo and white squares, symbolizes creation in its harmonious and
822 orderly entirety. Its separation into two layers recalls the duality of
801 nature, represented by a thin stripe through the middle. A happy man sews an entire strip into his tunic. The man who has difficulties of any kind divides it lengthwise and pins a small piece at the bottom of his garment.

291 The nyeba, "big eye," or koloso tyema, "mixed masculinity"
773 (with femininity), (Pl. III, a, 11) also represents creation, here sym-
822 bolized by the double layer of five indigo and white bands (1). At
801

1. On the value of number 5, see pp. 24, 25.

the same time the cloth also symbolizes the complete man, said to be both masculine and feminine. A newborn child, but never an illegitimate one, is clothed in it.

291 The band soli (Pl. III, a, 5) represents the good conduct of Mousso
773 Koroni at the beginning of her life as well as her betrayal which brought disorder on earth.

531 In olden times, people who had committed bad deeds were obliged
[764] to wear it. Today it is used as the shroud for a child who dies immediately after birth; a strip is sewn to the garment of a recently excised girl or to the loincloth of a woman insured in childbirth. When differences or conflicts arise within a family, a fragment is placed in amulets which the women must then wear.

[828] The wutu nyekorotike (Pl. III, a, 6) pictures the disorderly voyage of Mousso Koroni, her despair and her madness. This pattern is reserved for insane people in order to warn others of their condition.

The band gombo (Pl. III, a, 7) recalls the pursuit of Mousso /112/ Koroni by the god Pemba into the depths of the sky and the earth.

The band tyatyeli (Pl. III, a, 8) a picture of Mousso Koroni's defeat, symbolizes human work. It is given to a courageous and energetic woman. It is circulated among those present at religious ceremonies and its mere presence indicates that nothing here below is obtained without work and that all stems from work. To wear this band strengthens the man who is entering upon a task in a village other than his own.

The band saki is the koblenkaba, "red sky." It symbolizes heat, anger, difficulties, and sorrows. It is woven at the time of marriage negotiations for the purpose of resolving any differences of opinion.
[844] A piece of it is dipped into the blood after birth and then thrown away in order to purify everything.

[822] The blue stripes of dyitala represent impurity, and the red stripes, purification by sacrifice. Whoever has broken a taboo wears the blue, and the red when he is purified. A piece of red cloth may be inserted into the vagina of a young woman, after she has lost her virginity or

622 bones," that is to say, that he may live to be so old that his bones
778 will be visible through his skin which is transparent.

In (n) the bent part of the wood, called kuntigi tigiya jigi (literally, /136/ support of the chief's deed), is planted over the hair of the previously shaved albino (in o) from which it takes its strength.

[801] In (k), twenty-two small sticks are the symbol of the number 22, representing "the ensemble of words received by the ancestor Koumabana who was never caught unawares by anyone." In depositing these sticks, the officiator expresses the wish that the chief may become unbeatable like the ancestor.

[801] In (h), eight small sticks of zekene wood (1) represent the eight

[824] 1. Balanites aegyptica. This bush, according to popular belief, grows over the tomb of a man who died "with rancor and bitterness, as did Koumabana."

ancestors; they signify that man must be, like Koumabana, master of words and that he must be "true to his word."

In (f), the bird tatugu kononi, master of fire, is buried. The prayer recited states that it must be able to penetrate into the earth and come out freely, for since mythical times it has played a decisive role in combats (2).

2. See p. 155. The chief, who is sometimes obligated to declare war, must be able to win it.

In (g) is buried the head of the first child to die in the chief's family, in order to recall the loss suffered and to avoid its recurrence. On the skull are marked the signs of the person: two times 3 and 7, or two times 4 and 7, depending upon the sex of the deceased. In (j) the hair is buried, a testimony to the misfortune and the loss which should be compensated for. In (e) is placed the skin of the forehead, divided into two pieces; the piece on the right signifies that Faro is free to give the child for as long as he chooses; on the piece on the left are engraved the eight signs of the word, recalling that Faro, master of the word, is also master of the destiny of the deceased, whose number has been reckoned among the dead. In (p) a small

1: Dieterlen--269 E-5 (1946-1949) 1951 FA8 Bambara FA8

/210/ Chapter 8

DIVINATION

781 If we still find it difficult to isolate the general principles of divination among the Bambara, it is possible nevertheless to perceive identical elements among its diversified aspects. As soon as we approach the mechanisms and the symbols employed by the diviners, it appears that the first and fundamental element of divination is the "word," the creator of life, the motivation of the cosmos, and the power of Faro.

To foresee the future is to reveal to the secular the "word" which is situated in space as well as in time, and which is the will and the material expression of that will. Destiny is understood as the realization of the designs of creation to which all must conform. To submit to this will is supreme wisdom. To inquire into the reason for a past state or event, or to determine the attitude to be taken in the face of future states or events, is what the wise man can and must do.

The supernatural powers, rightful masters of the word, alone have to power to reveal it. They have done this in mythical times for all men by teaching them technologies capable of reparing the repeated disorders brought about in the process of creation. They do this for each individual if he is in need of it and if he knows how to read through the various methods of gaining knowledge which they have put at his disposal. It is therefore to them that the diviner addresses himself in order that the word be communicated.

781 801 Which will be the privileged signs over which the diviners will bend their efforts? It appears that these are numbers, notably the first twenty-two. In fact, all aspects of physical and moral life are inscribed in them. Taken as a whole, they reflect the succession of events in space and in time. A complex symbolism, which is superimposed over the others, is assigned to each one separately.

Each number has one or several meanings appropriate to it. /211/ It is odd or even, a notion linked to that of duality which has been so frequently mentioned in the course of this work. The sum of several numbers also expresses a particular idea which is added to those recovered by each element. Finally, a value is attributed to the succession of numbers, which is the first expression of time (1).

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1. This expression is symbolized by the progression of the first four numbers in the preliminaries of creation. See p. 23.

The first 22 numbers, which represent the totality of "words" and which express the sum total of the Bambara's mystical knowledge, must be considered from different angles according to whether they are seen as the 22 fundamental elements of creation, the 22 elements of the domination of this creation by Pemba, or the 22 methods and periods of the reorganization of this creation by Faro. In this series appears clearly the classification of elements composing the human being, ni, dya, tere, according to dualism which is Faro's own character and principle of action.

Moreover the stages of time, which itself did not exist before his domination, are expressed by the succession of numbers, each of which is linked to a part of the myth.

Current divination utilizes the first 22 elements at the level where they express "the order and the word of Faro."

1. kele. Faro; the word. Number of the master of the word. District of the chief; the right of the eldest, the right of the first; the head. The conscience: psychical aspect, moral aspect.

2. fla. Original duality, twinness. Faro's two female twins, the two first human twins. Love and friendship; union of beings. Necessity for man, however, to be straightforward in his action, not to follow two tracks.

3. saba. Sexual symbol of man and his soul. Birth of mixed twins, sons of the sinful Bozo women.

4. nani. Sexual symbol of woman and man's double (dya). Birth of a Bozo girl.

5. duru. Unlucky number composed of 4 (woman) and 1 (incompleteness). Miscarriage, failure, death. A stillborn child is called duru. However, it has an auspicious aspect and so signifies the universe (2).

2. See p. 24.

6. woro. Symbol of male twins (3 and 3). Lucky number (3).

3. Dɛ̀ke ni fla ye gariseke ye, "two little male twins, that is luck."

787 801 7. wolõfla. Symbol of mixed twins (3 and 4). Complete man possessing the ni and dya of opposed sexes. Complete world; growth /212/ of nature. Ideal image of creation; perfect word.

8. sekin. Symbol of female twins (4 and 4), of the eight ancestors and their word. Excess of words; danger of this excess caused by women.

9. konoto. Symbol of character or tere. Incompleteness.

10. tã. Composed of 6 (male twins) and of 4 (female birth), it is a lucky number and expresses the fertility desired by Faro as well as Faro himself.

11. tã ani kele. Conflict and debate. During the eleventh period after Faro's domination, Téliko wanted to resist.

12. tã ani fla. Téliko's attempt to dominate the world and to connive with men.

13. tã ani saba. Composed of 3 (Téliko, male spirit) and 10 (Faro): expresses Faro's opposition to Téliko's domination.

14. tã ani nani. Téliko's voyage.

15. tã ani duru. Téliko's defeat.

16. tã ani woro.
17. tã ani wolõfla.
18. tã ani sekin.
19. tã ani konoto.

} Faro's work in organizing the universe.

20. muka. Meeting of Faro and Téliko to decide on the order and progress of the universe.

21. duka ani kele. Faro's complete domination over creation.

22. muka ani fla. Total of the periods elapsed between the creation and the organization of the world. Conclusion and "end of the words."

The symbolism of numbers in everyday life comes into play every time they occur. From the beginning they were used to qualify tools and utensils. According to whether these belonged to men or women, they were marked respectively with three or four easily recognizable signs, indicating their ownership. Thus, in weaving, the shuttle carried three bobins, the spindle four lines.

Each ritual is repeated three times in the case of a man, four times in the case of a woman. If it is performed several days running or at regular intervals, the same rhythm is observed. Thus the dya of a drowned man is fed every three days, or every four days in the case of a drowned woman. The organization of the chief's district

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801 and the priesthood is founded on the same laws. A religious chief is generally accompanied by two aides or two elders belonging to his age grade. The group they compose is a duplication of the first three of the eight original ancestors.

Seven, the expression of perfect creation appears notably in the repetition of Faro's name when a request is addressed to him relating to fertility which may by symbolized /213/ by a male-female couple whose number is seven. To say Faro's name alerts him, but to repeat it seven times makes him hear that which may best satisfy him and presents him with what he desires.

Eight is the number of the ancestors who received the word and of the families that spread it. Six and eight, images of male and female twins, are at the basis of the Bambara system of numbers and calculations (1). Ten, which repeats unity, is composed of the sum of the

1. See p. 48, n. 1.

first four numbers marking the stages of creation; it represents Faro (2). Twenty-two, which determines the categories of the creative

2. "The religious function of the decade plays an extremely important role among the Bambara because the symbolism of all numbers is included in it as it contains them all. Since it can be made up by the sum of the first four numbers which in themselves express the unity and duality of the being, masculinity and femininity, the fourfold nature of twins, the very essence of existence—in a word the decade—expresses all that which is achieved within oneself, all that which is complete, perfect, and just. The very name of ten, tã̀, indicates these notions; moreover, instead of tã̀, ten, the Bambara often say dafare, "it is complete." Consequently, ten is the essential symbol of divinity." S. de Ganay, "Notes sur la théodicée bambara," p. 198.

787 801 thought yo, represents the universe; it is found on all sanctuaries or ritual objects.

Inversely, a number may be attached to an individual because of his behavior. It is said of a wicked man that he is an "eleven." The person who wishes to take power when he has no right to is "twelve." A man who is disgraced because he is denied that which he asks for is "thirteen."

787 Another fundamental element of the divining technique is derived from the state and qualities of the diviner. In order to question the supernatural, no special quality is ordinarily needed other than that normally required of a person making a sacrifice. Thus any Bambara, before making his offering, throws a kola nut on the ground to interpret its position. But the diviner is in a peculiar position. His spiritual elements, constantly in touch with the divinity, are the object of precautions which introduce him into the supernatural cycle and permit him to hear its message. They are, therefore, protected from the impurity which they might acquire in their contact with ordinary men. Because of this, the diviner is forced to respect a certain number of taboos. His double, guarantee for his state, is preserved by the spirits which protect it on the one hand and excercise control over its owner on the other. It is for them a means of action. "If the diviner has received the word and makes a mistake, the spirits may cause him to die." His mouth is filled up /214/ with a force which comes to him from these powers and which he must not misuse.

On the other hand, the trance is the state in which the spiritual is best expressed. In the excitement of the dance, at the frenetic rhythm of the drums, the Komo divines and predicts. At this moment he is entirely under the influence of the spiritual beings which express themselves through him.

Having presented these different points, is it possible in the present state of the inquiry to classify the methods of divination we have observed among the Bambara? This classification which we will attempt is tentative, and the observations will have to be taken up again more profoundly.

A brief description of several methods of divination currently in use is given below, and two of the techniques we have studied more carefully will be explained in detail: divination by guitar playing and divination by throwing cowrie shells (1).

791 this song calms his restlessness and gives him back peace and serenity.
533 "Whatever man is, he may not go beyond God" (1). The Soma
787

1. Moko a kera čokočoko a te teme ngala ka.

plays this air if the consulter harbors bad intentions or if he is ignorant or stubborn. He does the same to discover the gifts of a child and to encourage the family to develop his learning.

"Joy embellishes the world" (2) is performed for futile and pleasant

2. Klo ye dĩne dya.

things: feasts and dances, ornaments.

787 Divination, in a large measure, is the application of the static
801 and dynamic quality of numbers. On the one hand these translate the relationships; on the other, they are symbols for phenomena, beings, behaviors, situations, and in general all the constituent parts of the universe. Though not endowed with power in themselves, they symbolize powerful and well regulated elements. It may also be said that the numbers are superior realities, the same as the primordial signs which preceded the perceptibility of all things and on account of which the things began to exist once man had taken them into his consciousness. (3)

3. See p. 17.

In the course of divination, they indicate to the individual or collective consulter his personal position with regard to the rest of the universe. In a way, they permit the formulation of a particular equation for each person at a given time.

CONCLUSION

121 /227/ It is only recently that the discipline of silence adhered to by the Blacks has been relaxed in certain circles of the initiates. Human behavior, backed up by a rigorous method, has allowed a group of researchers to establish a documentation which suffers less from the usual faults. It is no longer superficial or fragmentary; it is

765 twice a day, morning and evening, they go in procession, their [514] heads covered with caps made of white cloth. They spend the nights together, in a single hut if possible.

The wives of the deceased go out only when it is ab- [279] solutely necessary during the first moon after the death; they are dressed in white and wear a kind of white hood on their heads and sandals made of goatskin on their feet. At the end of the moon, at night and separately, they go to a sort of puri- [783] fication rite that takes place at the crossroads outside the village.

Up to the fortieth day there is a very gradual return to ordinary life. Then, and only then, the successor to the deceased is finally recognized and installed, as is shown in the chronicle of Ségou.

• 801 805 In closing, let us note how every ritual sequence rests on periods of time whose real meaning must be sought in magic. The astral religion of the Semites in fact taught that on the third, seventh, and fortieth day after death the moon acts more powerful to destroy the body (1). Apparently some

1. See the meeting of the Academy of Inscriptions and Belles-Lettres of August 9, 1918, paper by Franz Cumont, "La commémoration des morts et l'astrologie [The Commemoration of the Dead and Astrology]," Journal Officiel (1918), p. 7224.

such beliefs must account for the Bambara rites planned precisely according to these numbers. This seems all the more likely since the Sudanese commonly believe that the fortieth day marks the separation of the flesh from the bones of buried corpses.

192 with nature; the same terms designate the parts of animals, plants, or even objects. These words serve as roots, as do the names of the four elements and of their properties. Two consequences follow:

1. A great ease in forming compound words; 2. The existence [194] of a multiplicity of homonyms which we can distinguish only by the context, but which the natives distinguish by differences in tone or in vowel length.

E. Numeration

802 In contrast to the Ouolof and Peul, who first count to five and then say "five and one," "five and two," etc., the Bambara have a different name for each number from one to ten (the word "five," doulou, [16] comes from "hand"; the word "ten", tan, from "to thank," to give both hands). After ten, they count "ten and one," "ten and two," up to 20, which is said as two tens, then three tens, four tens, etc., up to 80. The series begins again after 80 as it does in French after 100.

The Bambara have graphic signs to represent numbers. These 212 signs have been studied by S. de Ganay (1).

1. S. de Ganay, "Graphie Bambara des nombres" [Bambara Number Writing]. [Ed., Journal de la Société de Africanistes, No. 2, 1950.]

[184] The graphic system varies with regions and sometimes from one village to another, but the most widespread method uses a series of vertical lines, each line representing a unit. To indicate that the number is doubled, the lines are placed inside a circle or crossed by a horizontal bar: |||| or ⊕ or ⧺ = four. To indicate an uneven number, a line is added under the horizontal bar.

But a line may indicate not only a unit, but a group of ten, and even a "hundred," keme (whose value is 80). To keep this clear, an arc is put over the line: 80.

212 Some systems represent ten by ten lines or by five barred
801 lines under a single line. This method has a religious origin; it recalls that "creation is the issue of a unique principle symbolized

212 by numbers, and notably by ten, which may be obtained, among
801 other ways and if it's a question of representing the Creator, by adding the first four numbers, or by adding the number five to
[776] itself." Ten is the numerical symbol of Faro (god of water); it symbolizes what is just, true, perfect, and complete.

The symbolism of numbers is used in divination: a first
[787] group of eight signs, called the secret count, reproduces the seven first numbers which, according to a Bambara myth, were engraved in space at the instant that the Creator by his word formed the universe. They contain the whole universe.

These numerical signs were ritually traced on the most varied occasions.

Finally, we must note the existence of the sign for "nothing,"
[802] fu gundo, zero, which stands at the beginning of a series of 196 numerical signs used by those who practice arithomancy.

The word Mandé, of central significance for 44 peoples, may be interpreted, according to some, as manin (the secret name for ten), number of unity and of the cultural community.

F. Writing

212 For everyday use, the Bambara have adopted arabic characters, called by them "writing of the Blacks." In fact, only those who have studied in the Marabouts' schools know how to read or write them. No written literature, properly speaking, exists. A
538 large store of traditions, epics, tales, legends, songs, and proverbs is transmitted orally from generation to [17] generation by professional storytellers, the griot. Moreover, the whole sum of sci-
867 entific, juridical, ethical, and practical knowledge is taught orally
868 in the course of daily life or during long years of initiation. Certain old masters renowned for their learning are consulted from far distances when a chief is in doubt on a point of tradition.

212 Nevertheless, signs do exist for a secret writing that the priests, the heads of families, or blacksmiths draw on the sanctuaries, on masks, furniture, clothing, cabin walls, or in the sand.

212 For the Bambara, things exist by signs. These signs have at-
812 tached themselves to things, calling them to consciousness and to the attention of man.

physical male factor residing in the clitoris. The operation takes place, moreover, during the same period as the circumcision. It is carried out by the potteress, wife of the blacksmith, in full daylight before the assembled kin. During their seclusion the girls wear a white veil which plays the same role as the bonnet of the circumcised. Instead of the sistrum, the girls shake a gourd which contains eight millet seeds and cotton fibers which their fiancés have given them. A goat is sacrificed for the ceremony. The collected blood is given to the fiancé in honor of his ancestors who become those of the girl.

[93] On the last day of the ceremony the girls definitively rid themselves of their wanzo by jumping over a pyre composed of the clothes and scraps of the excised.

e. Marriage

It is only after having been circumcised or excised that young people may marry. The institution of marriage is regulated by a ritual which has often been described, particularly by Amar, Monteil, Tauxier, Aubert . . .

The marriage arrangements are made by the respective fa of the two betrothed, after the young people have been consulted. The request is officially made to the parents by an intermediary, a man of caste or a sénanku. It is accompanied by ritual gifts offered to the fa of the girl. In the Bougouni region the request is accompanied by ten kola nuts, because ten is a complete number that designates good events and future births. (Nine kola nuts are offered to present condolences, four as a sign of greeting. To send three nuts would be insulting, and 19 nuts, marking incompleteness, would be a sign of lack of confidence.) The first kola nuts to be offered are always wrapped in one or two karite leaves, symbol of life and of fecundity. If the ten kola nuts are accepted, it means that the father has opened the way to the marriage. The intermediary then make a second trip the following week, bringing a cock for sacrifice to the ancestors and ten more kola nuts; during a third trip he offers another cock and ten more kola nuts before the entire assembled family of the young girl, witnessing that the girl may meet her fiancé. In the course of the fourth trip, the intermediary leads the girl to the fiancé's family, where she will be confided to the wife of the head of the family who will undertake her education.

b. Pottery

323 Pottery is entirely fashioned and fired by the women of the blacksmiths' caste, masters of the fire. The modelling is done in two ways, either by hollowing a mass of clay with the aid of a cylindrical stone (2), or by rolling a cylinder of clay around a mold. The

2. M. Griaule, Masques dogons [Dogon Masks].

[531]

decoration is generally a double line of chevrons imprinted around the neck and the foot by the potter's twisted bracelet. The firing is done in the open air over a wood fire.

c. The Forge

326 Wood, iron, metals in general, are fashioned by the blacksmiths. The blacksmith's workshop and the objects he makes are simple, but they are rich in symbolic representations. "The forge represents the artisan: the furnace is his body, the bellows his testicles, the blast pipe his penis, the fire his head. When the red-hot iron is beaten by the hammer, which symbolizes the universe, the sparks are the lightning and the thunderbolt." (3) With his

3. G. Dieterlen, Essai sur la religion bambara [Essay on Bambara Religion].

rudimentary tools spread on the ground under a shelter, the artisan forges all farming instruments, the principal one being the hoe. The 412 hoe, [97] according to its shape, is considered to be male or female. 831 The female hoe has a short handle with an ovoid swelling at the end, [801] into which sticks the point of an iron triangle. The three sides of this triangle are three arcs of a circle; three, symbol of masculinity, represents here the clitoris, the male principle which sustains the [773] double, the dya, of the woman. (According to myth, it was with the 241 aid of this part of the body that the first being of female sex inaugurated agricultural labors.) The male hoe has a slightly trapezoidal iron part which is attached to the handle in the same manner. The four sides symbolize the femininity of man sustained by the prepuce. Thus,

822 in the rites. "Red is the color of the middle regions of the world. It characterizes dry heat; it is the color of anger and of justice, that of the king, center of the kingdom." Black or indigo (2) is

2. Zahan, Les couleurs chez les Bambara du Soudan français [Colors Among the Bambara of the French Sudan], Notes Africaines, 1951.

identified with the North and the [98] rainy season. It evokes impurity, obscurity. It denotes sadness and the end of labor. The South accords with the ancestors and the color white which represents light and purity; it is the color of Faro. The whole system
286 of bands woven from different colored threads according to various
822 designs translates the different conditions of the wearer, for each band has its own history, its definite use, and its cosmogonic correspondences. The study of this was begun by G. Dieterlen in Essai sur la religion bambara [Essay on Bambara Religion] and is being
291 pursued at the present time. Today the form of clothing varies according to the age and sex of the wearer. Young children are nude, with the loins girt with a cotton string or with a belt of blue beads or cowry shells. Sometimes, two small copper bells attract the protection of Faro by their sound. Up until their marriage, the young girls wear a loincloth passed between their legs and held in place by eight bead belts. When they are married, women wear the loincloth open, attached at the waist, and a cotton handkerchief covers
[854] their hair. When a child is born, another cloth knotted at the chest holds the infant astraddle on the mother's back A chief's wife
[554] wore a piece of material made of seven bands which she threw over her shoulder. Very young boys wear short drawers whose form varies with the age classes. Later they are dressed in a short tunic with a neck opening cut out and fitted sleeves, and in ample short breeches
[801] formed of three bands (the masculine number), passing between the legs and three bands on each side covering the thighs. The waist is also encircled by four times three bands, numbers of femininity and of masculinity. Over their clothes, men and women wear a large cloak with an opening cut out in the middle for the head and whose ends are sown together, leaving large openings on each side. These cloaks have a large pocket in front and are embroidered with symbolic